



**NATIONAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT
INFORMATION FOR STAFF**

25 March 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to update you on some of the key elements of the National Framework Agreement (NFA) that affect you, in particular the introduction of Job Evaluation to the University of Ulster.

2. THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

This is a National Agreement between the body representing all universities, the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA), and the various Trade Unions recognised across the Higher Education Sector. At the UU this includes Amicus, AUT and UNISON. All of these unions are involved with the implementation of the NFA in partnership with Management. The main elements comprising the National Agreement include:

- ~~///~~ A process of Job Evaluation
- ~~///~~ Implementing a new 51 point single pay spine
- ~~///~~ A process for determining grading structures
- ~~///~~ Access to training and development
- ~~///~~ Harmonisation of terms & conditions to ensure equality within grades

3. JOB EVALUATION - WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

The NFA demands a commitment by all Universities to introduce a new grading scheme for all staff within each institution. The aim is to implement a Job Evaluation Scheme which is fair, equitable and transparent.

The objective of the Job Evaluation Scheme is to deliver the following:

- ~~///~~ The creation of a framework of jobs within the UU
- ~~///~~ Consistency and parity of approach to evaluating this framework of jobs across the UU
- ~~///~~ Promotion of fairness and equality
- ~~///~~ Equal pay for work of equal value
- ~~///~~ Single column pay structure

3.1 What is The Scheme?

The UU has chosen the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) Job Evaluation Scheme for this purpose. It is an analytical points-based Scheme which is being used by 70% of Higher Education Institutions.

The main reasons behind the decision to use this system are:

✍ HERA has been developed for the Higher Education sector by key stakeholder groups within the sector;

✍ The development of the Scheme has been assisted by extensive consultation with Trade Unions in Higher Education.

3.2 The HERA Scheme

The system is a tool to analyse roles found in Higher Education. This process is referred to as Job Evaluation. HERA involves the use of fourteen elements:

- (1) Communication
- (2) Teamwork and Motivation
- (3) Liaison and Networking
- (4) Service Delivery
- (5) Decision Making Processes and Outcomes
- (6) Planning and Organising Resources
- (7) Initiative and Problem Solving
- (8) Analysis and Research
- (9) Sensory and Physical Demands
- (10) Work Environment
- (11) Pastoral Care and Welfare
- (12) Team Development
- (13) Teaching and Learning Support
- (14) Knowledge and Experience

HERA is used to create a role description or profile and a total points score for a role. This exercise has additional benefits in the longer term as the role profile can be used to support recruitment and selection, training etc.

4. NFA WORKING GROUPS

It is acknowledged that for a Job Evaluation Scheme to be effective it must be acceptable to all interested parties, ie the University, the staff to whom the Scheme will be applied, and the Trade Unions who represent

them. To this end the UU has engaged with the recognised Trade Unions (Amicus, AUT and UNISON) to put in place a structure to facilitate the implementation of the NFA and in particular Job Evaluation at the UU.

This includes a Joint Union and Management Framework Implementation Group (Joint Steering Group) and the following Working Groups

- ~~///~~ Job Evaluation
- ~~///~~ Training and Development
- ~~///~~ Harmonisation and Equality
- ~~///~~ Joint Communication Group

5. Progress to date

To kick-start this process the Joint Job Evaluation Working Group has identified approximately 400 posts to be evaluated. These posts are to be used as 'Benchmarks' to establish a grading framework for all other posts. The selection of the benchmark posts and postholders was anonymous and random and undertaken in conjunction with the trade unions.

Approximately 400 role holders have been identified to represent the benchmark posts. Each of these will be written to individually and will be given detailed guidance in regard to the process for evaluating their posts. Once all the Benchmark posts have been analysed (target date December 2005) this will create a framework against which all remaining posts in the University will be evaluated.

The University is aiming to have the entire process completed by August 2006 at which time all posts will be assigned to the new single column pay spine. At appendix one there are a series of 'frequently asked questions' and answers which will provide further details in regard to the process. At appendix two there are contact details for the project team working on the job evaluation exercise and they will be happy to answer any specific queries you may have.

NB. Job Evaluation is an analytical system which evaluates the size, scope and demands of a post relative to other posts in the framework. It does not evaluate the person or their performance in the post nor does it measure workload.

APPENDIX ONE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How does Job Evaluation affect me?

Staff will be assimilated onto a new single column pay spine in August 2006 in line with the National Agreement. The UU in partnership with its recognised Trade Unions will achieve this through the implementation of the HERA Job Evaluation Scheme in the University.

The University and the Trade Unions are currently jointly determining the way forward.

The first part of the process is to identify and evaluate the benchmark roles. The UU aims to complete this by December 2005.

How are Benchmark Post Role Holders chosen?

In line with Job Evaluation recommendations the UU is randomly and anonymously selecting approximately 10% of posts within the organisation. This has been done in partnership with recognised Trade Unions. All benchmark posts and Role Holders have been chosen randomly within set parameters such as gender, grade, location, and post title etc.

How can I get further information?

The UU has sent out a communication to all staff in the UU in November 2004 about the NFA and its implementation. Information will be available from your Trade Union and they will also keep you up to date with developments in the evaluation process at the UU. Additionally any member of staff can contact the Project Team at any time with any queries they may have.

Benchmark Post Role Holders participating in the Job Evaluation process may be supported by a Trade Union representative or a work colleague. The vast majority of interviews will be on an individual basis, however, in cases where a number of individuals share the same post, some group interviews may be conducted with representatives from that group.

How will my job be fitted into a new grading structure?

It is envisaged that as a result of Job Evaluation a number of "Job Families" will be determined and there will be a range of grades within each job family. Jobs will be awarded grades arising out of the Job Evaluation process and assigned to a job family.

At the moment staff may be doing very similar jobs but are in different staff groups. Will the move to a new pay structure have any effect on this?

One of the reasons for carrying out the work on modernising the pay structure is to ensure parity of treatment for all staff. The new grading scheme will mean that staff will be assimilated onto a single column pay spine rather than having separate pay structures for different staff groups as at present.

Can I appeal the outcome of Job Evaluation?

Yes. The Joint Working Group will establish an appeals mechanism for any individual who feels that his/her job has received an inappropriate grade through Job Evaluation. This mechanism will be communicated to all staff when it is agreed. The decision from the appeal mechanism is final.

What will happen to staff whose existing salary does not match the outcome of Job Evaluation and new grade?

For some staff Job Evaluation may result in moving to a grade, which exceeds their current salary, and therefore the job will attract the salary appropriate to this grade. For some staff Job Evaluation may result in moving to a grade which is below their current salary. In this instance the Role Holder's grade will be protected for up to four years as agreed with the Trade Unions under the NFA. Additionally the University will employ its Redeployment Principles and where possible it may result in a person being able to move on a voluntary basis to a post at their current grade. Generally speaking in job evaluation exercises the majority of posts tend to remain unchanged.

Will I be informed of the total points score for my role?

At this point in time the University is carrying out Job Evaluation on benchmark posts/role analysis. These posts form the framework for determining the matching/evaluation process for the remaining posts and therefore individual point scores for benchmark posts cannot be revealed until the process is complete.

The size and complexity of this exercise and the target deadline of 1 August 2006 means that staff should all receive the relevant information on Job Evaluation outcomes at the same time.

If I am not in a benchmark post/role, how will my grade be assessed?

A matching process will be used to evaluate all other posts. The benchmark roles provide a consistent framework against which the grades of the remaining posts will be determined.

The details of this process are still to be determined.

APPENDIX TWO**ROLE ANALYSIS PROJECT TEAM**

| Name | Job Title | Tel Ext |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Carmel Maguire | Project Officer | 66882 |
| Jacqueline Cook | Project Officer | 68558 |
| Paul Brown | Project Officer | 68561 |
| Alison Wilkinson | Project Assistant | 66822 |
| Christine Hayes | Human Resources Assistant | 23260 |
| Or contact | | |
| Kelly McBride | Role Analysis Project Manager | 66947 |

There are a number of individuals you can contact for advice:

1. Kelly McBride
Role Analysis Project Manager
General information on role analysis
Ext. 66947 or e-mail
k.mcbride@ulster.ac.uk
2. Role Analysis Project Office
Ext. 66882 or e-mail
3. Line Manager
For specific queries relating to your role
4. Human Resources Advisor/Consultant
For HR and procedural queries
5. Union Representative
For procedural or specific queries
6. The Role Analysis Web Pages
<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/hr/national%framework%20agreement/index.html>

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Role Analysis Project Team
c/o Employee Relations Department
Room 8M19
UU Jordanstown

Any further information can be made available on request in accessible formats, including Braille, disc and audio cassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.